Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. The claims find full support in the specification and/or claims as filed.

Listing of Claims:

1.--20. **(Cancelled)**

21. **(Currently Amended)** A computer implemented method for dynamically optimizing a buyer/seller relationship for a web marketing site, the method comprising:

predicting that a buyer/seller relationship is degrading; wherein the predicting that a buyer/seller relationship is degrading comprises determining if a customer <u>currently at the web marketing site</u> is likely to leave the web marketing site before being served; and

taking measures to prevent degradation of the relationship; wherein taking measures to prevent degradation of the relationship comprises offering a promotion to a <u>the</u> customer <u>while the customer is currently at the web marketing site</u>.

22. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 21, wherein the determining if a customer is likely to leave the marketing web site before being served step further comprises:

estimating an impatience of a customer; and

estimating the expected profit from said customer as a service time for said customer increases.

23. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 21, wherein the determining if a customer is likely to leave the marketing web site before being served step further comprises:

estimating an expected service time necessary to serve a particular impatient customer;

estimating if the particular impatient customer will leave the web marketing site before being served; and

wherein the particular impatient customer is offered favored treatment if it is determined that the particular impatient customer will leave the web marketing site before being served.

24. **(Cancelled)**.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 21, wherein:

the determining if a customer is defunct step further comprises:

specifying a permissible defunct threshold at a manager console; and

determining a probability that a customer will become defunct; and

the offering the promotion to a customer step further comprises:

determining the promotion, wherein the promotion is determined by sampling via a sampling engine;

the sampling comprising:

determining a size of a sample, the sample comprising other defunct customers, wherein a customer is defunct if the probability that the customer will become defunct is greater than a permissible defunct threshold;

offering different promotions to the other defunct customers; and

determining the promotion based on responses to the different promotions offered to the other defunct customers;

wherein the promotion is propagated to the web marketing site.

26. **(Cancelled)**

27. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein promotion is automatically propagated to the web marketing site.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the permissible defunct threshold is set according to an inter-login time of a customer at the web marketing site.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the promotion comprises a discount on a product that maximizes customer retention.

30. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the different promotions comprise different amounts of discount on products.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the promotion comprises a discount on a product that maximizes profit.

32. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the permissible defunct threshold is set lower for important customers.

33. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 25, wherein the sampling further comprises:

segmenting the defunct customers into socioeconomic groups; and

only sampling customers belonging to certain socioeconomic groups.

34. **(Currently Amended)** A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for dynamically optimizing a buyer/seller relationship for a web marketing site, the method steps comprising:

(1) predicting that a buyer/seller relationship is degrading; wherein the predicting that a buyer/seller relationship is degrading comprises determining if a customer currently at the web marketing site is likely to leave the web marketing site before being served; and

(2) taking measures to prevent degradation of the relationship; wherein taking measures to prevent degradation of the relationship comprises offering a promotion dynamically optimized utilizing continuous real-time modeling to a the customer currently at the web marketing site.

35. **(Currently Amended)** The program storage device according to claim 34, wherein:

the offering the promotion to a customer further comprises:

determining the promotion, wherein the promotion is determined by sampling via a sampling engine;

the sampling comprising:

determining a size of a sample, the sample comprising ~~other~~ defunct customers, wherein a customer is defunct if the probability that the customer will become defunct is greater than ~~the~~ a permissible defunct threshold;

offering different promotions to the ~~other~~ defunct customers; and

determining the promotion based on responses to the different promotions offered to the ~~other~~ defunct customers;

wherein the promotion is propagated to the web marketing site.

36. **(Cancelled)**

37. **(Currently Amended)** A computer implemented method of dynamically optimizing customer retention for a web marketing site, comprising:

(a) determining if a customer is defunct, wherein the determining if the customer is defunct comprises:

specifying a permissible defunct threshold at a manager console; and

determining a probability that a the customer will become defunct; and

(b) determining a promotion dynamically optimized utilizing continuous real-time modeling, wherein the promotion is determined by sampling via a sampling engine;

the sampling comprising:

determining a size of a sample, the sample comprising other defunct customers, wherein a customer is defunct if the probability that the customer will become defunct is greater than the a permissible defunct threshold;

offering different promotions to the other defunct customers; and

determining the promotion based on responses to the different promotions offered to the other defunct customers;

wherein the promotion is propagated to the web marketing site.

38. **(Cancelled)**

39. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim ~~38~~ <u>37</u>, wherein the promotion comprises a discount on a product that maximizes customer retention.

40. **(Previously Presented)** The method according to claim 39, wherein:

a permissible defunct threshold for customers that have previously spent more than $1000 is set lower than a permissible defunct threshold for customers that previously spent more than $50; and

the promotion is propagated to the web marketing site for offering to subsequent customers each time the promotion changes by a particular amount, as discovered via sampling, the particular amount comprising $0.25.